



# Speaker's Task Force on Foster Care

Volume 1 / Issue 1

## MEMBERS

R-Rep. Patrick Snyder (Co-Chair)

D-Rep. Steve Doyle (Co-Chair)

R-Representative Ballweg

R-Representative Rodriguez

R-Representative Neylon

R-Representative Novak

R-Representative Kitchens

R-Representative Katsma

R-Representative Pronschinske

D-Representative Subeck

D-Representative Billings

D-Representative Meyers

D-Representative Crowley

## INFORMATIONAL HEARING- MADISON, WI

The Speaker's Task Force on Foster Care held its first informational hearing on Thursday, July 27, 2017 in Madison. The committee heard from several organizations that play a role in the foster care system. Below, you will find brief summaries of the organizations in attendance, their role in the foster care system, and some of the issues discussed.



Co-Chair Doyle and Co-Chair Snyder



## DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

The Department of Children and Families kicked off the informational hearing by giving a general overview of the Wisconsin Child Welfare System. Fredi Bove, Administrator of the Division of Safety and Permanence, discussed the purpose of the child welfare system, the functions of child welfare agencies across the state, and Wisconsin's incorporation of trauma-informed principles in the child welfare system. She also gave a broad overview of the number of children in out-of-home placements and the trend we have seen over the past ten years. The Department discussed Foster Care rates, training requirements, and the Termination of Parental Rights (TPR). They gave statistical information on the number of youth aging out of the foster care system and the specific outcomes for those who are leaving the system.

### INVITED SPEAKERS:

#### **Fredi Bove**

Administrator of Division of Safety and Permanence

#### **Ron Hermes**

Director for Bureau of Permanence and Out-of-Home Care

#### **Wendy Henderson**

Director for Bureau of Youth Services

#### **Jonelle Brom**

Section Chief  
for Out-of-Home Care

#### **Lonna Morouney**

Legislative Liaison

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## COALITION FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES

The Coalition for Children, Youth and Families is a nonprofit organization funded in part by grants from the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families. The Coalition addressed the needs of current and potential foster families, foster care coordinators, relative foster care families, and youth living in foster care. Oriana Carey, Chief Executive Officer, also discussed the Coalition's research and development of creative strategies for foster care recruitment and retention efforts.

### INVITED SPEAKER:

**Oriana Carey**  
Chief Executive Officer



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## WISCONSIN COUNTY HUMAN SERVICE ASSOCIATION



### INVITED SPEAKERS:

#### **Chuck Price**

President, Waupaca County Health and Human Services Director

#### **Ray Przybelski**

Vice President, Portage County Health and Human Services Director

#### **Diane Cable**

Co-Chair, Children, Youth and Families Policy Advisory Committee  
Eau Claire County Health and Human Services Director

The state Child Welfare System is a state supervised, county administered program in all counties besides Milwaukee (where the state administers the child welfare system through the Department of Children and Families Division of Milwaukee Child Protective Services.) The Wisconsin County Human Service Association (WCHSA) plays a significant role in the foster care system given that 71 counties maintain responsibility for carrying out the work of the child welfare system. WCHSA addressed the challenges the county human service departments face when dealing with child protective services. The counties report the cause for the increasing numbers in children in out-of-home care is tied to the heroin, opioid, and meth epidemics across the state. WCHSA also spoke to the increase in the number of children and youth who are placed in out-of-home care who present significant complexities related to mental health/illness, alcohol and drug issues.

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## CHILD ABUSE & NEGLECT PREVENTION BOARD



### INVITED SPEAKER:

**Rebecca K. Murray**, Associate Director

The Child Abuse & Neglect Prevention Board (CANPB) is an independent board comprised of 20 state government officials and public members. The Board works to put forward statewide policy, public awareness and programming to strengthen families and prevent child maltreatment. Rebecca Murray, Associate Director of CANPB, spoke about the organization's Community Response Program which provides voluntary supports to families who are reported to Child Protective Services but are not receiving services because the referral was screened out or is screened in for further assessment. The organization also focuses a number of their efforts on child maltreatment prevention. Rebecca discussed the number of different levels of prevention used according to the audience that is being targeted.

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## CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL OF WISCONSIN

Children's Hospital of Wisconsin has over 125 years of experience caring for children and families. David Whelan, Director of Family Case Management Services, and Kristin Kopcha, Director of Family Preservation and Support, addressed the number of services Children's Hospital provides to children and families across Wisconsin. Children's Hospital delivers services in homes and in communities to provide positive development and prevent adverse outcomes. They also offer short-term in-home program that helps parents who have been screened out for child maltreatment or have been investigated and found unsubstantiated. David and Kristin also highlighted the Family Find technology tool the organization uses to identify and locate family members. The organization uses Family Find as a way for children to establish a relationship with biological family members when possible.



### INVITED SPEAKERS:

#### **David Whelan**

Director of Family Case Management Services

#### **Kristin Kopcha**

Director of Family Preservation and Support

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## LUTHERAN SOCIAL SERVICES



### INVITED SPEAKERS:

#### **Kim Westfahl**

Director, Adoption and Out of Home Care

#### **Allison Novak**

BSW, CSW, Supervisor, Foster Care Services

Lutheran Social Services of Wisconsin and Upper Michigan, Inc. is a statewide, nonprofit, social service agency. LSS provides Foster Care Services, Public Adoption Services, residential facilities for youth, runaway services, family preservation service, and outpatient therapy. The LSS Foster Care Services Program works to provide out-of-home care for youth ages 0-21. They currently have four Level 5 foster homes that provide 24 hour care to children with significant behavioral, emotional, or medical needs. LSS also works with the state to place children in out-of-home care into safe and loving adoptive families, serving as the lead Public Adoption agency with offices in La Crosse, Eau Claire, Wausau, and Appleton. Kim Westfahl, Director of Adoption and Out of Home Care, and Allison Novak, Supervisor of Foster Care Services, spoke to the organization's work over the past several years with young adults aging out of the system. They acknowledged that much has been done over the past several years to improve services to this population, but there are many opportunities to provide better supports to children during this difficult transition.



To access footage of the committee meeting, please visit Wisconsin Eye.

<http://www.wiseye.org/Video-Archive/Event-Detail/evhdid/11720>